

**Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Board**

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**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY AND AUDIOLOGY BOARD  
Department of Consumer Affairs  
Medical Board of California  
1424 Howe Avenue  
Greg Gorges Conference Room "F"  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
May 10, 2002  
AUDIOLOGY PRACTICE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present**

Rebecca Binge, M.A, Chairperson  
Marcia Raggio, Ph.D.  
Alison Grimes, M.A

**Board Members Present**

Jim Till, Ph.D.  
Sherry Washington, M.A.  
Bruce Gerratt, Ph.D.

**Staff Present**

Annemarie Del Mugnaio, Executive Officer  
Candace Raney, Staff Analyst  
Lori Newman, Staff Analyst

George Ritter, Board Counsel

**Guests Present**

Robert Powell, California Speech-Language Hearing Association

## **I. Call to Order**

Chairperson Bingea called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m.

## **II. Introductions**

Those present introduced themselves.

## **III. Legislation**

Ms. Bingea asked Ms. Del Mugnaio to provide the Board with information regarding pending legislation.

Ms. Del Mugnaio explained that the packets provided to the Board included the Legislature's calendar as well as a chart that she uses to track legislation that is of interest to the Board.

### **A. AB 1914 Medi-Cal – Hearing Aid Coverage**

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that AB 1914 is currently in the Appropriations Committee. It has not yet been set for hearing but is expected to be scheduled soon.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that there have been a number of amendments to AB 1914 and that the Board submitted a letter of opposition on April 2, 2002 based upon the original language of the bill.

Ms. Raggio explained that much of the controversy surrounding this bill stems from the language in the original text of the bill that refers to a hearing aid dispenser "evaluating" and/or "assessing" a hearing loss and whether this language expands the scope of practice for a hearing aid dispenser. She stated that after a lengthy discussion among representatives from the California Academy of Audiology, the Hearing Health Care Providers of California, and ultimately Assemblymember Kehoe's office, the language introduced in the original version of the bill regarding performing an "audiometric evaluation" was amended to read "hearing aid assessment."

Ms. Grimes stated that this bill does not appear to accomplish any significant changes to the law with the exception of allowing a hearing aid dispenser to bill for hearing aid "assessments."

The committee discussed the matter and the amendments to the bill.

The committee expressed concern regarding the proposed language of the bill and the ambiguity of the term "assessment."

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that an option for the committee is to withdraw its opposition to the bill but remain neutral due to the ambiguity of the language in the most recent amendment.

M/S/C: Grimes/Raggio

The committee voted to recommend to the full Board to draft a letter withdrawing its opposition to AB 1914 and indicating the Board's current neutral position.

## **B. SB 1638 – Hearing Aid Coverage - Persons Under 18 Years of Age**

Ms. Bingea stated that SB 1638, introduced by Senator Scott, is a proposal that would require health care service plans to provide coverage of up to \$1200 for hearing aids for all subscribers under 18 years of age. Among the supporters of SB 1638 is the California Speech-Language Hearing Association.

Ms. Del Mugnaio explained that SB 1638 was amended on April 30, 2002 and is currently before the Appropriations Committee. It is scheduled for hearing on May 13, 2002.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that the Board does not currently have a position on SB 1638 but recommended that the Board review the language and determine if it is appropriate to take a position at this point.

The Committee decided to recommend to the full Board that a letter of support be drafted regarding SB 1638.

## **C. AB 2884 – Hearing Aid Coverage**

Ms. Bingea stated that AB 2884 is supported by the California Academy of Audiology and CSHA. This bill would allow for billing of \$1200 per hearing aid, per hearing impaired ear, every 46 months. The patient would be allowed to pay the difference, if they choose a higher cost hearing aid.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that all hearings regarding AB 2884 have been postponed. AB 2884 is currently being held in the Assembly.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that she does not expect AB 2884 to progress beyond its current status. She recommended that the Board submit a letter of support to the author's office as a means of establishing support for the initiative for future legislative attempts.

M/S/C: Raggio/Grimes

The committee voted to recommend to the full Board that letters of support be drafted and submitted regarding SB 1638 and AB 2884.

#### **IV. Discussion and Review of Topics for Sunset Review Report**

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that she conducted some research and determined that no state addresses intraoperative monitoring in their practice act. Maryland and Oklahoma address intraoperative monitoring by policy statements. These statements indicate that if an audiologist has training and experience in intraoperative monitoring, it is deemed to be within the scope of practice of an audiologist.

Mr. Gerratt expressed concern that the practice of intraoperative monitoring is not currently regulated.

Ms. Del Mugnaio stated that there is a national accreditation body that administers a comprehensive examination on intraoperative monitoring and accredits candidates who meet the examination and training requirements. She stated that the majority of hospitals require certification in order for an audiologist to perform intraoperative monitoring.

Ms. Del Mugnaio explained that she and Ms. Grimes worked together to draft correspondence to Dr. Robin Vaughan informing Dr. Vaughan that the Board would support an effort on his part to develop proposed legislation relative to intraoperative monitoring. Information relative to the process for introducing state regulation of a particular practice was included with the letter and sent to Dr. Vaughan.

The committee discussed the process of preparing and submitting individual summaries on identified topics for the Sunset Review report to Ms. Raggio for review and inclusion into the draft report. Ms. Raggio stated that she will compile the submissions from the members and prepare a draft document for the committee to review and discuss. Ms. Raggio also requested that the speech-language pathology board members submit their information to Mr. Till for review.

Ms. Del Mugnaio suggested that the Board prepare a final draft of the Sunset Review report by April/May 2003 to discuss modifications and adopt a final report by August in order to meet the deadline for submitting the report to the Department of Consumer Affairs.

Chairperson Bingea adjourned the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

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Annemarie Del Mugnaio, Executive Officer